

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated June 27, 2006. Claims 1, 4, 7, 14 and 20 are amended herein. No new matter has been added by the amendments. A Request for Continued Examination is submitted herewith. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account 02-1818 for any fees which are due in connection with this Response.

On page two of the Office Action, the Examiner notes that the application appears to claim subject matter disclosed in prior U.S. Patent Application Nos. 10/640,840 (U.S. Patent No. 6,905,407) to Nordman and U.S. Patent Application No. 10/243,462 to Nordman et al. Applicant notes that a Terminal Disclaimer was filed on April 12, 2006 with respect to U.S. Patent No. 6,905,407. Further, Applicant will not be claiming priority to U.S. Patent Application No. 10/243,462 that was filed on September 13, 2002.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1 to 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,336,863 to Baerlocher et al. ("Baerlocher") and in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,584,763 to Kelley et al. ("Kelly"). Applicant respectfully disagrees with and traverses this rejection. In addition, as stated above, Claims 1, 4, 7, 14 and 20 were amended to more clearly define the invention.

Amended independent Claim 1 recites, at least in part, a display device including an indicator operable to rotate about an axis as the axis translates relative to the reel and operable to sequentially indicate different ones of the symbols displayed by the reel, the indicator including a plurality of pointers that are operable to sequentially point toward the reel as the indicator is rotated about the axis.

Amended independent Claim 7 recites, at least in part, a display device including a symbol display operable to simultaneously display a plurality of first symbols, and a first symbol indicator operable to rotate about an axis as the axis moves substantially parallel to the symbol display to indicate different ones of the first symbols displayed by the symbol display, the first symbol indicator including a plurality of pointers operable to sequentially point towards the symbol display as the first symbol indicator is rotated about the axis

Amended Claim 14 recites, at least in part, a method of operating a gaming device including simultaneously displaying a plurality of symbols on a symbol display,

translating an axis of rotation of the symbol indicator relative to the display of symbols, and rotating the symbol indicator so that multiple pointers extending from the symbol indicator sequentially point towards the display.

Amended Claim 14, recites, at least in part, a method of operating a gaming device including rotating a symbol indicator about an axis as the axis translates relative to the display of symbols, wherein multiple pointers extending from the symbol indicator sequentially point towards the display.

The Office Action alleges that Baerlocher teaches all of the elements of Claims 1, 7, 14 and 20 with the exception of a plurality of pointers. (See, Office Action, pg. 7). Baerlocher provides a bonus selector or indicator 36 in the form of a rotating pointer that rotates about a stationary axis and is positioned in the center of a bonus wheel. (See, Baerlocher, col. 3, lines 37 to 38). However, as mentioned above, Claims 1, 7, 14 and 20 recite, in part, an indicator operable to rotate about an axis as the axis translates relative to (or move substantially parallel to) the reel, the indicator including a plurality of pointers that are operable to sequentially point toward the reel as the indicator is rotated about the moving axis.

In one example of the claimed embodiment, as illustrated best in Fig. 4 of the present application, the axis 82 of the indicator 80 is set by a mounting shaft 102 affixed to the back side of the indicator 80. (See, Specification, pg. 12, lines 4-6). In this example, a stepper motor 58b which is controlled by a motion controller 56b, causes the rotation of the indicator 80 about the axis 82. Also in this example, the motion producing device 58b is mounted to mount 108 which includes a collar 112 and which is journaled about a lead screw 114. (See, Specification, pg. 12, line 19 page 13, line 2). A gusset 116 supports the mounting surface of mount 108 with respect to the load placed on such surface via the cantilever caused by motor 58b and indicator 80. (Id.). Mount 108 also includes a threaded portion or welded nut 118, which threadingly receives the shaft or lead screw 114. The lead screw arrangement in combination with stepper motor 58a provides a highly accurate and versatile mode of converting the rotational output of output shaft 124 of stepper motor 58a to the translational motion of the axis 82 of the indicator 80 which is set by the mounting shaft 102. Therefore, Claims 1, 7, 14 and dependents thereof are not rendered obvious from the disclosure in Baerlocher of a pointer that rotates about a stationary axis.

The Office Action relies on Kelly merely for the purported teaching of a plurality of pointers. Similar to Baerlocher, Kelly discloses circular display having a rotating symbol indicator. The indicator in Kelly does not include an axis of rotation that translates or moves in parallel with respect to anything. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of Baerlocher and Kelly does not render obvious Claims 1, 4, 7, 14, 20 and dependents thereof, even assuming they are properly combinable.

In addition, contrary to the comments at the top of the page 7 of the Office Action, the claims were not previously amended to indicate that a reel rotates about an axis. Indeed, the amended independent claims recite, in relevant part, an indicator operable to rotate about an axis. For example, Claim 1 recites, in part, an element of a reel and also recites an element of an indicator. While it is true that reels generally revolve about an axis and may have displayed symbols that are indicated by an indicator (e.g., a payline or other stationary indicator), the cited references do not disclose teach or suggest the presently claimed indicator, where the indicator, at least in part, rotates about an axis as the axis translates relative to the reel.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103 rejections of Claims 1 to 23.

An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and in the absent of more pertinent art such action is courteously solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this Response, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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